

News Release

U of M, Crookston Among U.S.News & World Report's Inaugural Top Online Education Program Rankings for Its Online Bachelor's Degrees

By ltollefs on Tuesday, January 10, 2012

The first-ever edition of Top Online Education Program rankings by U.S.News & World Report finds the University of Minnesota, Crookston ranked nationally among the top 40 colleges and universities in two separate categories for its online bachelor's degree programs. The U of M, Crookston earned the #32 spot out of 173 colleges and universities nationally in the Teaching Practices and Student Engagement category and the #40 spot out of 179 schools nationally in the category Student Services and Technology. The rankings were made public today by the news organization.

U.S.News & World Report created these rankings in response to today's high demand for education provided in a flexible manner. Online education has become increasingly popular due to this flexibility.

"This kind of recognition certainly underscores the quality and dedication of our faculty and staff who have been working with online education for more than ten years," said Charles Casey, chancellor of the U of M, Crookston. "It's yet another way we are able to serve students in a manner that addresses their needs and utilizes technology while helping them make important career connections."

The U of M, Crookston currently offers ten degree programs entirely online (these degrees are also offered more traditionally on-campus as well). They include Accounting (B.S.), Applied Health (B.A.H.), Applied Studies (B.S.), Business (B.S.), Communication (B.S.), Health Management (B.S.), Information Technology Management (B.S.), Manufacturing Management (B.M.M.), Marketing (B.S.), and Quality Management (B.M.M.). These online programs are administered through the Center for Adult Learning.

"The U of M, Crookston's online degrees provide students with an exceptional brand in an accredited academic environment," said Michelle Christopherson, director, Center for Adult Learning. "Our online learners value the flexibility of our online degrees--available 24/7 when they can fit it into their personal and professional responsibilities. Being recognized by U.S.News and World Report's top 40 online ranking is validation and proof of our commitment to students and their academic future."

Susan Brorson, Ph.D., professor and department head of the U of M, Crookston's Business Department, added, "This recognition speaks to the dedication of our faculty and staff in meeting student needs with quality course designs and our commitment to a world-class learning experience. It's also a tribute to the outstanding students who have been or currently are enrolled in our programs and the interaction they experience within our online learning environment." Half of the U of M, Crookston's online degree programs are offered by its Business Department.

While U.S.News has applied some of its rankings standards used for traditional schools, many new measures have been developed and were used to evaluate online programs. In order to be considered for the rankings, online degree programs needed to have at least 80 percent of their course content available online.

Online bachelor's degree programs were ranked in three different categories: Teaching Practices and Student Engagement, Faculty Credentials and Training, and Student Services and Technology. Ranking indicators for the Teaching Practices and Student Engagement category included class size, teacher response timeframe, student collaboration policy, and anti-plagiarism screening policy among others. Student services and technology-based indicators included live tutoring and 24/7 tech support, the ability for students to receive classes through both audio and visual, and having all courses centralized into a single student information system, such as Blackboard or Moodle.

Data was collected from both for-profit and not-for-profit schools. For more information about the rankings methodology, please go to www.usnews.com/onlinemeth. There were no numeric rankings for overall program quality this inaugural year.

For more information about the University of Minnesota, Crookston and its online degrees visit www.umcrookston.edu/online, call 800-862-6466 ext. 8681, or e-mail cronline@umn.edu. For more information on the U.S. News Top Online Education Program rankings, please visit www.usnews.com/education/online-education or find U.S. News on Facebook or Twitter.

Today the University of Minnesota, Crookston delivers 26 bachelor's degree programs, 18 minors, and 36 concentrations, including 10 online degrees, in the areas of agriculture and natural resources; business; liberal arts and education; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of 1,600 undergraduates from 25 countries and 40 states, the Crookston campus offers a supportive, close-knit atmosphere that leads to a prestigious University of Minnesota degree. "Small Campus. Big Degree." To learn more, visit www.umcrookston.edu.

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